

**NAME OF PROJECT:** *Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII*

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**NAME OF INTERVIEWEE:** Pasqualina Pat Adamo

**NAME OF INTERVIEWER:** Francesca L'Orfano

**NAME OF VIDEOGRAPHER:** Travis Tomchuk

**TRANSCRIBED BY:** Francesca L'Orfano

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## **ABSTRACT**

Pasqualina Pat Adamo is the granddaughter of Francesco and Filomena Guzzo, who immigrated to Ottawa before the 1900s. Her father was Pasquale Adamo and her mother was Mary Capello. During World War II her grandparents were designated enemy aliens and had to report weekly to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] office on Sparks Street, in downtown Ottawa. At that time her father Pasquale Adamo was already deceased. Pat was 12 years old during the period and she recounts how grateful her family was that her grandparents were not interned and were only inconvenienced with having to sign in. She recounts how her family did not experience any other discrimination or hardship during that time, other than one incident Pat had with a classmate at school. The Guzzo-Adamo grocery store was the first Italian store to be built on Preston Street, an area that would become Ottawa's Little Italy. The Guzzo-Adamos were part of the handful of the first wave of Italian immigrants to Ottawa who not only built Little Italy, but also were instrumental in building the first Italian Canadian Church, St. Anthony of Padua, at the corner of Gladstone and Booth Streets.

## **INTERVIEW**

**PPA: Pasqualina Pat Adamo, interviewee**

**FL: Francesca L’Orfano, interviewer**

**TT: Travis Tomchuk, videographer**

[Title screen]

[Fades in at 00:00:10]

FL: Um, thank you, uh, for taking the time to be with us today. Um, if you could first of all just tell us your name [noise in background] and, um, in terms of your connection to, uh, the internment situation in, in Ottawa.

[Camera shifts slightly]

PPA: Yes, well my name is Pasqualina Adamo, uh, but I, in English of course, I go by Pat Adamo. And of course, uh, we were the first Italian grocery store to be built on Preston Street in 1912. So actually we, we were really the center of attention if you want to put it that way. And, uh, of course, uh, my grandparents, uh, were the persons we worried about at the time of the war and how it would affect us, uh, both physically because of them—because my mother was born here actually and so was I, and my brother, but, uh, my grandparents, of course, were from Italy. And, uh, we were worried because being the—and in those days there weren't very many Italian stores in Ottawa. So, uh, being in the centre of let's say of Preston Street, uh, we were worried.

FL: And, and what, uh—could you tell us your parents’ name—uh, your grandparents’ names and then what specifically—can you remember details of what was going on that made you worried?

PPA: Well yes, uh, first of all there were RCMP running around the street. They came in the store of course because we were as I say a central store. The names of my grandparents were, uh, Fr-Francesco and Filomena Guzzo. And, uh, my father's name was Pasquale, like me, Adamo, and my mother's name was Mary Adamo. And unfortunately by this time my, my father had died and so my mother was really running the store because she spoke English and, uh, not much Italian actually. She was Italian. But, uh, so my mother ran the business with my grandparents, uh, Francesco and Filomena Guzzo. And they were the ones who were more or less, as we figured, targeted. I think that, um—and then the RCMP were coming in all the time to the store and we knew, we knew by the fact that that the RCMP were coming about and we were the number one business. I mean we were, um, not only targeted, but we felt we were the ones who should—uh, would be, would be picked up.

FL: And then what happened?

PPA: Well what happened was I, I—we don't really know essentially, but what we figured in ourselves was that our grandparents were too old to be sent to the internment camp. So what they made them do was, um, go and sign every week, uh, my grandfather and grandmother, uh, my brother used to drive them up to somewhere on Sparks Street. And, um, I believe they probably weren't the only ones. But they went up to some office on Sparks Street and they had to sign in every week.

FL: And how did this information get relayed to them, that they had to do this?

PPA: Oh the—well the RCMP came down. No, the RCMP came down. And, and they used to, after that, they would pass by and drop in, you know. And they wouldn't do anything, but, uh, you knew you are on, uh, on look out. Yeah.

FL: And how did that feel? Do you—how old were you at the time?

PPA: Well I was about 12 or so. Uh, yes it was, uh, worrisome to my mother, you know. We, we were afraid you see that my grandparents would, uh—might be taken away. So you were always afraid when the law came around. You know how it is, uh, we were in business and, uh, uh, also my grandparents of course didn't speak much English. So, uh, because you don't really understand, you were afraid of the police, you know. You have the RCMP coming in, in full uniform. You know, maybe two or four of them. I remember because we used to live behind the store. So they would come in the front door. And it was never—they never did much, but they scared the pants off you, you know.

FL: Mm hmm.

PPA: [Smiles] Yeah, it was worrisome.

FL: And the, the, uh, information about, uh, you know, that they had to go and sign, was that, was that—did they take—did they come and take your grandparents away one day and then—and...

PPA: [Inhales heavily]

FL: Or how did that—

PPA: No.

FL: —unfold?

PPA: No, no they were informed, we were informed, you know, and that this would have to happen. So, um, they—we were given the address and so on and as I was saying my brother usually drove them up because you—in those days too you couldn't park downtown. [Camera goes out of focus, while Pasqualina smiles] And my brother would drive them up and then just drive around and wait for them to sign and pick them up again, you see.

FL: Do you, do you remember anything your grandparents may have relayed about how they felt having gone through this at, at the time or—

PPA: Uh, they were afraid. We were all afraid, you know. And we were Italians, you know. [Says with emphasis on the "I", pronouncing it Eye-talians] I, I was getting it at school; uh, you got it at school, "You Italians." [Pronounced as Eye-talians] You know. It was pretty shocking for the Italians to go, uh, to go into the war like, uh, not on the side of, uh, the British, you know. This was shocking and, uh, yeah, you got this business of, "You Italians," [pronounced as Eye-talians] you know. Yeah.

FL: Can you elaborate a little bit more on, on that experience, your school experience?

[00:05:02]

PPA: Uh, yes, yes, because, uh, I know one day I had a problem, uh, in the, um, uh, when I w—in—when we were doing, um, sports and so on and I—uh, someone called me a, a name, you know, uh, "A damned Italian." [Pronounced as Eye-talian] And, uh, I actually pushed her, you know, and of course [chuckling] I—we got into trouble; had to go to the principal's office. And, uh, I remember, you know, uh, I remember saying to the, um, to the principal, that, uh, you know, she called me a so-called Italian [pronounced as Eye-talian]. And, uh, and so I, I resented

it, I'm a Canadian, you know, a, a Canadian born. My mother was born in Canada. And, uh, I said that I, I just got angry and pushed her and, uh. So the principal—I wasn't punished. [Smiles] I was not punished on account of that. I mean I assume that it was, uh—I was not punished. Yeah.

FL: Okay. And before all of that had happened, how, how—things at school were fine? Did—were—

PPA: Oh yes, uh—

FL: —you weren't called names?

PPA: No, no, no, no. I, I don't think a lot of people were at my—our age were aware of really what was going on, you know. It was so far away. You know, we were really far away from Europe. And, uh, in those days there wasn't the TV coverage, there wasn't all this, uh, kaffuffle there is now, that you know, you know, before it happens over there. So, there wasn't much of a problem, no.

FL: And was that the only incident you can remember or—

PPA: [Nods] Yes, yes, that really was the only incident. Yeah.

FL: Okay. And what about your other, um, Italian friends or Italian Canadian friends at the time. Do you remember of any other—

PPA: No, to my—

FL: —situations that arose? That—

PPA: Mm hmm. No, I don't really remember anyone ever telling me that something happened to them. No. It—I don't think it affected us all that much really. It didn't affect, for example, our business either.

FL: Yeah.

PPA: Uh...

FL: That was going to be my next question.

PPA: Yeah.

FL: You know, what—before this happened and after...

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: ...wa-was there a change in things—

PPA: No, essentially as far as the grocery business was concerned there wasn't any change. Of course, at that time, you have to remember that there weren't, uh, the numerous Italian stores that there are in Ottawa now. And also there was not the—uh, there were not the products, Italian products, in all the supermarkets. Because now, for example, you don't have to go to an Italian store, you know. And, uh, they, they, uh—at that time, you had to come to Preston Street, and, uh, we were, as I say, the first store. There weren't that many either and, uh, there

were not many Italian products in the supermarket, so you had to come to Preston Street. And that didn't change, that essentially didn't change.

FL: So even though that the RCMP was dropping in—

PPA: Yeah.

FL: —it didn't—were—I'm assuming most of your clientele were Italians, other Italians—

PPA: No, no. Well most of them were Italian, but no, we had a lot of, uh, non-Italians, because like I said, our place was the place to come. We were the, uh, original first store; we were well known. We were well known for, uh, original products, you know. We used to get things directly from Montreal. And we didn't sell the olives in bottles; we had barrels of olives in front of the store. So we were, at that time, uh, I would say, uh, the principle place to come. So, no it didn't really affect, um, people's taste in Italian food let's say, you know. Yeah.

FL: So non-Italians still continued to—

PPA: Oh, absolutely.

FL: —even though, even though this—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: Okay.



PPA: Mm hmm. Uh, because my mother spoke English without an accent; my mother was born here, you see. And, um, so there was—my grandparents—uh, my grandfather helped my grandmother and my mother in the store. But, um, essentially my mother was very Canadian, you know. She looked Canadian and she spoke Canadian. She spoke—actually when she got married she didn't speak Italian, she spoke French and English 'cause she went to school, uh, at the Rideau Street Convent. She lived on Rideau. And so she didn't speak Italian. So she, you know, she—they'd come in and my mother was very much Canadian. Yeah.

FL: What about, um, the other families of, uh—there were internees in Ottawa. Um, just some of the hardships of, of, you know, the breadwinner—how did that—as you said the store was a central location.

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: Uh, did your grandparents—uh, how, how were—how involved were they in, um, dealing with the community that was dealing with the RCMP—

PPA: Yes, well I think one of the reasons that we didn't have much of a problem with my grandparents was that they were old. And so they were not too in—they were not involved in the community, uh, in the sense that they were organizing things and that sort of thing. They, they did that way back in 1912 and '13 when they were young and they moved here and they helped to build St. Anthony's Church. And, uh, they opened up the community, like I said, we—they built the, the store building and so on in 1912. Uh, but by, by this time they were old and they were not at all involved. I mean they, they would be involved because we had the store and somebody came down and asked for money to contribute to the church or whatever. So we were, we were, we were not really involved and therefore, we didn't have any problem with

the RCMP or so on. They would come by, uh, periodically, checking, you know, but there were, uh, other people that were more involved in the community and in setting up things than we were. So, uh, I don't think my grandparents were ever really threatened with going to the internment camp.

[00:10:25]

FL: Did they, however, help some of the families who were threatened—

PPA: Oh, yes, yes. Well the families that were involved, they were, I would suggest, somewhat destroyed. Because number one, they lost their jobs. And, uh, and then there was a certain stigma too attached to it. So that, uh, they lost their jobs and you could imagine back then, a lot of them didn't have their houses paid for yet. And in those days, uh, the wives didn't work. Uh, and a lot of them had their parents with them, that had come over from Italy. So, it was very, very hard on the families that went in the internment camp. Very difficult. Especially, especially when they lost their jobs and their families didn't have any income.

FL: Mm hmm. And did the store help in any way in terms of in allowing for buying and...

PPA: Well yes. Well you know we, we, we always had, uh, uh, uh—what would you call it—a list, uh, bought on credit, you know. In fact I still have some of the books here in my desk, uh, with the unpaid, unpaid bills. [Nods] I wouldn't say it was particularly those people, but yes, we give credit. Yes, absolutely. Mm hmm.

FL: I just want to go back to your grandparents when they—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: —were their signing in. Were they given any, you know, reason or what—how was that explained that they had to go in? As you said they were elderly...

PPA: To be honest, yeah, I don't really remember, but as, as far as I remember, there wasn't much contact. I mean they were just told. Like I, like I—from what I remember—we lived behind the store, so I would see these people coming in—uh, I don't remember that they came in and did any particular talking and that. Just maybe they came in and said, you know, “You have to go and sign up on Spark Street.” They must have given them the address and so on. And, uh, there wasn't much talk. I don't think it would have done much good anyway, because my grandparents were so Italian, you know. Uh, not that it wouldn't have done much good in—uh, I don't mean that exactly the way it sounds. But because they were very Italian, they didn't speak much English, um, it wouldn't have meant much to them. They knew, they knew there was a war; they knew there was a problem. [Gestures with hands] We all knew there was a problem. You know, My God, we're Italians and the Italians are going against us, you know. We, we were worried about that. But, um, they didn't, um, you know, they just—they knew they had to do something, so it didn't, um, uh—you know, not that it didn't bother them, but they didn't think about it very much. No.

FL: Okay.

PPA: And we were not explained...

FL: Okay.

PPA: ...it wasn't explained to us why, at least from what I recall. Yeah.

FL: So, uh, my next question is, is both as a child, putting yourself—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —in that time, um, you know, ex—giving us, if you have any other in—you know, how you felt at the time?

PPA: Yes.

FL: I mean, you've, you've elaborated a little bit on that, but then also as an adult...

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: ...now that—you know, when you did understand, you know, a little bit more, you know, how—did your feelings change? How, how did you feel in, in both contexts? Uh, first as a child and then...

PPA: I don't exactly know what you mean?

FL: Well, when it, when it was—when you lived through it, do you have—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —I mean, you mentioned you were afraid and—

PPA: [Nods] Mm hmm.

FL: —um, can you elaborate a little bit more on, on—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —on that time for your family? You know—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —your're, you're, you're—as a child, you, you knew your parents ha—your grandparents had to sign in...

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: ...um—

PPA: Well, I, I was always, uh, extremely disappointed when I heard that Italy didn't go into the war with—'cause I was old enough to understand. I was very upset. I was always—we were. Our family was. My brother and my, my mother. We were upset about this. And even my grandparents. Uh, it was unbelievable to think that they would have gone, you know, not with the British. And, uh...that always bothered me. Uh, but what could you do about it, you know. And we were over here, uh, and of course we were born here, so we didn't think like Ital—maybe...it isn't fair to say that I would think like an Italian-born person either...see because I wasn't born here. But I was very, very upset and very disappointed. My mother too and even my grandparents were. We didn't expect that because, uh, even as my—when my grandparents

spoke about it they were always, uh—there was always this, uh, respect and closeness to the British, you know. [Gestures with hands] So it, it was very—I think it was very shocking for everyone.

FL: And how did you feel then when Canada started rounding up Italians—Italian Canadians—

PPA: [Sighs heavily]

FL: —or British subjects at the—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —were naturalized.

PPA: Yeah.

FL: And how did your family react to that?

PPA: Well, we were upset because we e-expected to be the first ones. We were the first and oldest store in Ottawa. We expected to be the first ones to be picked up. And, and we expected my grandparents to be picked up—perhaps not my mother so much because she was born here—but my grandparents. But then as it turned out, they were too old. They would have been. They were, they were naturals. [Shrugs]

[00:15:15]

FL: Mm hmm.

PPA: The first family, you know. And, uh, but they weren't. And I think, I think we were just lucky that they were old. And—

FL: And, and how do you feel about the government making such a decision though? I mean—

PPA: Well, I think—I believe that they had to do something. After all [shrugs and holds out hands] we went to war against them. I think that Canada—we have to protect our interests. Uh, I think that it was a normal, a natural thing to do. And I think they were—I thought they were kind of—when you look back—I didn't think of it then, but I, I think they were probably quite fair about it. Because for example they did not take my grandparents even though they could have. There was no reason, even at their ages that they couldn't go to the camp, you know.

FL: Mm. But what about the families that—

PPA: Yeah.

FL: —they did take? How did, how, how did—like now looking back as an adult, uh, with the full extent of knowing that—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: —a number, I think seven hundred or so—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —were interned, uh, and no one was ever charged, so how—

PPA: No.

FL: —how do you [squeak in background] reflect back on that? And—

PPA: Well I, I think it was very sad and I suppose—I have a feeling that, that perhaps even, even our own government people didn't know what to do about us, you know. But they had to do something. [Gestures with hands] I—and I'm, I'm sure this was behind it. They had to do something to show our Canadian people that they were putting it to the Italians for going against us. I think that was the, the score. And, uh...I think they were very good in, in Ottawa, to be honest. Uh, and I, I imagine everywhere else, but they had to do something to us. [Smiles] You know. They had to show the Canadians that they were punishing us. And, uh, they took that attitude to form these internment camps. I don't know how that came about. But anyway, uh, they had to do something and I, I, I think we have to accept that.

FL: So, in, in light of, of that, I'm sure you heard of the, the, the controversy around compensation—not compensation—apology—

PPA: [Clears throat] Yes.

FL: How do you feel as an adult, uh, who's also part of the Italian community—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —and...



PPA: Well, I, I think that, uh, I, I think that in all...rights that it wouldn't hurt. Uh, uh, certainly good public relations. It's good Canadian-ism. It's good all around to say have someone—uh...I don't know about the word apology. [Gestures with hands] Uh, the word apology is a big word. And, uh, I don't know, they, they were doing something—this was war. So I don't know if apology would apply to war. But I think that, uh, some mention of it, some type of acknowledgement that we did this because it was the war, you know, and therefore we had to do something. And I believe that that had to be done. And, uh, compensation...well, uh...[sighs] I don't—I really don't know about the compensation because certainly, um...uh, certainly that, um, compensation could have been provided because a lot of the families didn't have anything and, and something maybe should have been done to help them...I think. I, I don't know what we could have done though, this is something I—I'm not sure. But, uh, certainly a lot of the families suffered greatly because in those days, of course, uh, most of these people were Italian, they came from Italy, their wives didn't speak English and it was very—would have been very difficult for them to get jobs, and they had children. And, uh, but if you—if you're talking about—are you talking about compensation now or...

FL: Well I, I, I—

PPA: ...or then?

FL: —the question comes from the Japanese, uh, were interned as well—

[Camera angle shifts slightly]

PPA: Yes.

FL: —and they were given an official apology and they were given compensation. So, this question has risen in the Italian—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —community a number of times—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: —um, to somehow—this chapter has never been closed because, you know—and so the controversy is on both sides—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —and so we're just asking our—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: —interviewees—

PPA: Yeah, I, I—well, I think it would be good public relations for us at this time. Yes, I think it would be good public relations to, uh, acknowledge that perhaps we were overcome. Because, for example, uh, my mother was born here—now mind you they didn't threaten her—but, uh, my—and my grandparents had been here for a long time and they were, um, uh, they were not involved, they were uneducated, uh, for example, and they didn't even know it was going on initially. And I think there's—they're typical of the kind of people who got, uh, uh, put in the

camps; the, uh, older—because at that stage these were older Italians who—most of them anyway—who didn't even know what was going on in Italy and a lot of them, like my grandparents, were not educated people. So I think it was maybe overdone, but again as I say as Canadian—as a Canadian, uh, the government had to do something to say, you know, “You, you Italians did...” [Gestures with hands] We have to do something.

[00:20:22]

FL: Do you think you would feel differently if your, if your grandparents had been interned and taken away from you for—or is, is it—

PPA: [Nods] Yes, yes, of course I would have. Yes, of course I would have felt differently. I would feel differently. [Crosses her arms across chest] I, I—maybe at this stage today I would agree that something had to be done [smiles and gives slight laugh while talking] about my grandparents and everyone else's. But at the time, I guess, we were, we were very, very happy that my grandparents were not taken in and that all they had to do is go downtown and sign in. But we knew, oh yes, we cried and everybody cried and we knew that we were lucky that they were old, otherwise even, uh, my grandmother probably wouldn't have gone away, but my grandfather for sure would have gone away. So we wer—yeah, we knew at the time that we were lucky, yeah.

FL: You mentioned earlier that—you know, the stigma around internees. Was there a stigma around having to go and sign in? Did, did your grandparents feel that—

PPA: [Sighs] Uh...

FL: —or, or you or your mother?

PPA: You know, no, as I recall, we didn't. Because we knew something had to be done.  
[Gestures with hands] We knew that like something had to be done. And because a few of the people in Ottawa had gone to the internment camp, we were happy that all my grandparents had to do were—was to go and sign in. But we knew—you know, like I say, we were Canadians; my mother was Canadian—and, um, we understood that something had to be done because the Italians did this and we were of Italian descent. And we were very, very happy that they had to go and sign only.

FL: Were you familiar with other families who had to also just go and sign? Was, was that in terms of the Italian community, which was small at the time.

PPA: Yeah, you know—

FL: Were there other families that had to...

PPA: You know that's a good question because to be honest, I don't remember. Uh, well I was too young to really be concerned about other families. There may have been a few other families. You must remember at that time there were not a lot of Italians here. But, uh, there may have been some other families, uh, that, that signed. I don't recall any, to be honest, I really don't, I really don't remember if there were any other families...signing in.

FL: Um, and now just—do you have any other reflections or I—uh, you're, you're familiar with the other families. It was a, it was a close-knit community.

PPA: [Clears throat]

FL: Um, is there anything else you'd like to share, um, about, you know, relationships, um, before, after, today? Just on—reflecting on, um, the internment of Italian Canadians—

PPA: Mm hmm.

FL: —and how it affected the Ottawa community?

PPA: Yes. Well [clears throat], I think it was pretty shocking, uh, because the Ottawa Italian community has always been very small, it's even small today. You can imagine then, I think probably there may have been maybe only about 100, 150 Italian families. So the whole business about the war was so shocking, you know, that—and the, the big shocking thing in my family was, How come they went to—on that side? You know. [Gestures to her right with hands] [Mumbles] They were friends of the English, it was very, very shocking and, um...everyone was just perplexed more about it, uh, than anything else. They didn't really understand what was going on and they didn't expect to be involved here in Ottawa because we were so far away from it. And, uh—but it was a big deal, it was a big deal. [Nods] I know that my grandparents were very upset about it. And, uh, uh, as I say, we were lucky that, uh, they didn't have to go to a camp. And, uh, and the families, a few families—because there weren't that many that had to go from here because we're, we're a small community. But it affected the community, you know. But I have to admit that, um, uh, I was not really, um...threatened by it or I wasn't bothered by, by other children and even at school, like I said there was that one incident when someone said something to me and I reacted of course. But, um, other than that, uh, there was not much said about it. I, I think that—I think it's a compliment to Italy, actually, that we were not considered that dangerous, you know. [Smiles] And we weren't considered to be the enemy, type of thing. Uh, no, we really didn't suffer and the store didn't suffer, the business didn't suffer at all, no.

FL: And in terms of the Italian community or the Italian Canadian community, many of the, the, um...uh, families were naturalized. They were, they were—

PPA: Yes.

FL: —British subjects. When you say that, you know, it affected the Ottawa community, do you remember any—did, did it go back to normal after or how long did that take? Did it really, you know—

PPA: No, it went back to normal. Yeah, it was as if—well, not that nothing happened, but it just went back to normal. I, I think in all fairness that it's because the Italian community here in Ottawa was very small. And, and I, I think that the types of businesses and so on that they were in, that it, it just naturally went back to normal. And I think people, uh, the normal Canadian—like say non-Italian Canadians, uh...didn't think of us as enemies or as, you know, having been in the war and so on. I, I, I think we were well treated. [Nods] Yes.

FL: And, and in the last—you know, do you, today as an adult, or in the last, like—

PPA: Mm.

FL: —ten or fifteen years, has it come up that you talked about, um, that your parents had—your grandparents had to go sign in, with other Ottawa, you know—

PPA: Never.

FL: —has it—it's never come up. Okay.

PPA: [Shakes head] It—I-I've never had it come up in my circles, you know, I—Italian or non-Italian. I—the business of the war—it's so far back, you know. And, uh, it's never, it's never come up in my experience at all, in my lifetime, you know. And I don't think I'm treated differently. I'm treated differently as an Italian because, you know, “Oh, you're Italian! You have good food, you know.” [Smiles and gestures with hands] Everybody likes our food; “I want your recipe.” And, uh, we are con—that's something that is, is true, you are sort of thought of as Italian, you know, and, and, but it's—to me it's complimentary because, “Oh, you're Italian! Gee, you know, I love spaghetti and you must have an extra special recipe.” And certainly we're...we're certainly distinguished. But it's—I think it's a good distinction. I think we have a, a good name. And, and we're know, we're know for all the good things; for the arts, for the music, for the opera. We're known for our, our kitchen—the number one, our kitchen. This is what everyone wants is our, “Oh! You must give me your recipe.” You, you know. So, I, I, I think we're very well thought of, uh, as a, an ethnic group. I think we're—and I think we're considered that we certainly more than contribute to the Canadian way of life.

[00:27:04]

FL: Hmm. Are there any other memories you'd like to share of your grandparents and your mother? Just in terms of, you know, just, uh, growing up and not necessarily the event of the internment, but just something, um, that you still remember them by? That they...

PPA: My own family for example?

FL: No—

PPA: Well, I—yes, I, I've been very lucky really. My, my mother's family for example, uh, they've all done well, you know. Doctors and, uh, everybody went to sch—university and, uh, everybody parti—we participate, you know. And, uh, with ourselves and my own family, uh, I participate, my brother Joe participates. And, uh, um, I think that, um, my own family has, has and is contributing as a very fruitful, um, part of the Ottawa community. They're all educated. I have, you know, doctors and lawyers and things all over the city who are related to me. And, uh, we were lucky, they were able to go to university and their parents were able to work. And the first thing was, as I think you will agree, that, um, the Italians, the first thing to do was, uh, send the children to university. And that's what happened. So, uh, yeah, I have a very nice network of, uh, family and friends and, um, they're contributing to life in Ottawa. You know, you—I don't want to say their names because...because, uh, because... [Smiles and gestures with hands] But, uh, certainly we're contributing to life in Ottawa and this was, uh, made possible by the fact that when my relatives came over they were able to go to work and they wanted to earn money and they did put it in the bank to send the kids to university. And I know that even the immigrants of today, they—the first thing is, the kids got to go to school. That's number one priority. That's the number one priority in Italy, 'cause I've been there to visit. And that's the big priority, is the kids got to go to university. So, I think that, um, when you look around in the Ottawa community, that the Italian faction has certainly, uh, contributing.

FL: And it began with your grandparents as well.

PPA: Yes, yes, it began with both sets of grandparents because actually, both of them came over before 1900. My mother was born here in 1899. So my mother's family—well, I can say my mother's name. Her name was Mary Capello. And they came over in, uh, 18—they came over—well my mother was born in 1899 so they—uh, I don't know when they came over exactly, but they must of come over somewhat before that, not long maybe. And, um, and then on the, uh,



on the Guzzo and Adamo side, they came over also, uh, uh, in the early 1900s. So, certainly we're at foot of the community. Yes, and like I said with the few others that were here—my grandfather was—and my dad were the first ones to build on Preston Street. They—in the old days everybody lived [gestures to her left with hands] down in the market and we had a house on Clarence Street apparently. And, uh...and then anybody—in fact, it's kind of cute because almost anybody who came to the station, the railway station—which was, as you know, uh, on Rideau Street, um—when they were Italians—the few Italian immigrants who would come from Montreal or whatever, they'd get off the train and they didn't know where they were or what they were doing and they were automatically brought down to my grandfather's on Clarence Street. They were well known as being one of the few Italian families. And at that time, I remember my grandmother saying that, you know, sometimes they had as many as, uh, 10, 10 immigrant guys, uh, who were brought over, you know, and had 10 immigrant guys living with them. And all the different pots on the stove, sometimes they didn't want to eat the same thing, you know. [Laughs while speaking] Or they wanted to save money. And, and, um, so, um, uh, this was, uh, very exciting, you know. And then eventually my grandfather and my dad bought one of the first properties in 1912 on Preston Street and that I would say, opened up, what is now Little Italy. And at the same time in 1913, with that handful of Italians that were here, they built St. Anthony's church at the corner of Gladstone and Booth and really [gestures with hands] cemented the fact that this was going to be the Italian district. And then other people moved from downtown because downtown they were in the market, you know, and they moved down to the Preston Street area and filled in [gestures with hands] those other streets as far as Carling Avenue. And, uh, like I say, we, we had the store and, uh, upstairs they built—they built the building so that it would have the store on the first floor and then two apartments above it. And so we lived above the store. And, uh, and then other people moved down and it became Little Italy, you know. [Laughs]. And...then...exciting because then—and I

still lived there; I lived there until a short time. And I'm still not far away from Little Italy, yeah.

[Smiles]

FL: Well, thank you very much for sharing your, your, uh, your, uh, stories with us today.

PPA: Thank you very much. [Nods and smiles]

[Fades out at 00:32:01]

**[End of interview]**